Living City

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CHIARA LUBICH

AN ASPECT OF THE FOCOLARE MOVEMENT'S SPIRITUALITY BY ITS FOUNDRESS

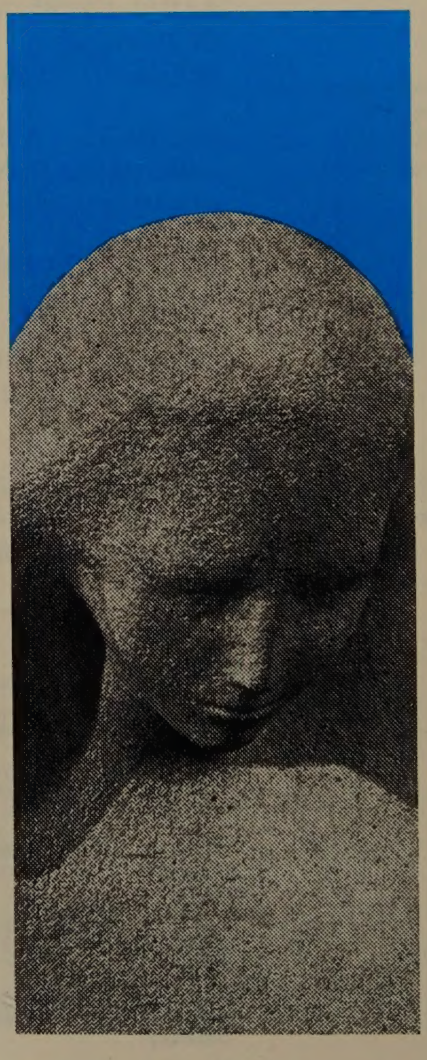
MARY THE MODEL OF PERFECTION

PART I

In 1961, the Lord led us to focus our attention on this phrase from Scripture: "For this is the will of God, your sanctification" (1 Thes. 4:3). We clearly understood that personal sanctification did not only concern exceptional people, like the saints; rather, it was God's will for all Christians. That same year, while we were reading the spiritual books of the great Spanish contemplative, St. Teresa of Avila, we noted that the life of the soul, like that of the body, passes through different stages, different steps with their own specific characteristics as well as trials allowed by God with certain typical effects occurring after each trial has been overcome.

And then, to our surprise and wonder, we realized that in the spiritual life of the members of the Focolare Movement, growth in the life of the soul . . . is analogous to that which Teresa described, notwithstanding the fact that ours is a way of life in the midst of the world, whereas Teresa's was lived within the confines of a convent.

This experience made it clear to us that the Movement did not only make a contribution to the fulfillment of Jesus' last prayer, "That they may all be one . . ." (John 17:22); that it was not just an evangelical movement which also accomplished social good; likewise, it was not only an ecumenical movement; nor had it come to life solely in order to give witness to the truth of Christ to an incredulous world; besides all of these, the Movement was showing itself to be a way of life leading individuals to sanctity.



One of our strongest intuitions at that time was this: Yes, God had shown us a way of life leading to sanctity, but he was also showing us a model whom we could imitate in order to reach our goal. The model was Mary. Although the different moments in Mary's life, as they are presented to us in the Gospel, were often quite extraordinary, we saw them as successive steps which we could refer to for light and encouragement in the different stages of our spiritual life.

The first step in Mary's life was the Annunciation. Mary had always been a chosen person by God; however, the Annunciation had particular significance in

her life. The angel appeared to her with a message from God which she accepted. Because of that "yes", a new reality immediately blossomed in her; it was the start of Jesus' physical life within her.

Something similar to this also occurs in the lives of the saints. When one visits the Church of St. Damian in Assisi (the place where St. Clare, the most perfect disciple of St. Francis, lived for many years), the tour guide often describes that sacred place by saying, "Here is where Christ was incarnated in the heart of St. Clare."

What does this mean? All of us know that St. Clare had been baptized, and we may assume that she always lived in the state of grace. Yet her meeting with St. Francis, who was the personification of a word of God — poverty — addressed to the world, brought about something new in St. Clare. That word entered her soul, causing Christ to develop and grow in her, to the extent that she became one of the greatest saints of the universal Church.

Likewise, when at a certain point in our own lives we come to know the spirituality of our Movement through another person or publication, when we feel God's call to choose him as the everything of our life with all the consequences, and if we say "yes" to God, something similar to that which happened to Mary and the saints happens to us.

Christ is able to truly begin to develop more fully and grow mystically in our heart.

The second mystery in Mary's life was the Visitation. We know how Mary hastened to visit Elizabeth in order to help her because she was in need. However, Mary found Elizabeth to be open to the mysteries of God. She felt that she could communicate to Elizabeth the great secret which she held in her heart. She sang the Magnificat: "My being proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit finds joy in God my savior. For he has looked upon his servant in her lowliness; all ages to come shall call me blessed" (Luke 1:46-48).

Mary was telling Elizabeth her extraordinary experience, from which we can see how Christ, who was already living in her, gave meaning to the past, the present and the future.

No sooner have those who know the Movement chosen God as the ideal of their lives than they feel they must begin to love in order to put this choice into practice. Imitating what Mary did with Elizabeth, they feel the desire to help those in need and try to share their joys and sorrows. However, at times it happens that these people whom they meet feel their love and notice that there is something in the heart of the ones helping them: a limpid joy, or a sort of readiness in helping others; and these people ask to know the "secret" which makes them act as they do. Here, then, is the moment to share one's own experience. Before coming to know God so deeply, perhaps none of us would have been able to say anything about our own lives. However, when God is living more intensely in our heart, he enlightens us from within, making us almost see his plan for our life. The past is then seen to be linked to the present. This light is projected toward the future — the future toward which we have ventured by saying our "yes" to God.

Everyone knows that one of the characteristics of our Movement is precisely that of sharing our own experiences of life with those who wish to hear them. We do this in order to share the gifts of God and to give one another encouragement.

We know, however, that by visiting Elizabeth, Mary did not only perform an act of charity or she did not just sing the Magnificat. Something else took place: because of Christ's presence in Mary, John the Baptist was sanctified while still in the womb of his mother Elizabeth.

Keeping in mind the great difference in proportions, something similar occurs when members of the Movement relate their own spiritual experience with humility, objectivity and conviction. These experiences through a special grace often contribute to the sanctification of those who hear them, although obviously not in the same way as with St. John the Baptist.

They are in fact more than just the story of an individual. In these experiences, one can see the blossoming of an age-old tree whose flowers are blooming in this season, giving witness to the tree which is the Church.

I recall that once a group of people who believed only in material values converted after simply listening to one of these experiences. At the end they exclaimed, "Now we understand!" And to our question, "But what did you understand?", they replied, "We have understood the revolution of Christ!"

Through the little revolution which Christ had worked in that person who shared the experience, they understood Christianity.

The third mystery in Mary's life, a marvelous one known to all of us, is the birth of Jesus. Mary offers him to the world.

When a person begins to live our spirituality, he or she tries to love as the Gospel teaches. But when two or more of us begin to do this, our love becomes mutual. It is the fulfillment of Jesus' command, "This is my commandment: love one another as I have loved you" (John 15:12).

What's the consequence of this? Jesus becomes spiritually present among us. This can happen in factories, in schools, and in families — which become living cells of the Mystical Body — because Christ reigns among two or more: between husband and wife, among superiors and their subordinates, among colleagues at work, among friends.

Mary gave Jesus physically to the world; we, too, if we live the Gospel can give Jesus to the world in a spiritual way.

(to be continued)

THE HIGHER SELF

JOHN PAUL II

"Temperance" is the fourth and last of the talks on the cardinal virtues given by John Paul II at his first general audiences. (Reprinted from "The Pope Speaks," Vol. 24, No. 1,1979)

Temperance

To the Audience of November 22, 1978

During the audiences of my pontifical ministry I have sought to carry out the "testament" of my beloved predecessor John Paul I. As you know, he did not leave a written testament because death cut him off suddenly and unexpectedly but he did leave some notes which show that his plan for his initial Wednesday meetings was to speak of the fundamental principles of the Christian life, namely the three theological virtues (this is the only part he had time to complete) and then the four cardinal virtues. It is this unfinished part that his unworthy successor is now completing.

Today it is the turn of the fourth cardinal virtue, "temperance". With this we bring to completion, in a degree, the program of John Paul I in which we may see the testament, as it were, of the deceased pontiff.

When we talk of the "virtues" — not just of the cardinal virtues but of any and every virtue — we should always keep our eyes on the real human being, the concrete person. A virtue is not something abstract, cut off from life. On the contrary, it has deep "roots" in life itself; it springs from life and in turn shapes it. A virtue influences the life of the person, his actions, his behavior.

From this it follows that in all these reflections of ours we are speaking not much of "virtue" as of the individual who lives "virtuously." We are speaking of the prudent, just, courageous man and, finally, today, of the "temperate" (or "moderate") man.

INTERDEPENDENT

Let us add immediately that all these human qualities or rather attitudes which flow from the several cardinal virtues are interdependent. It is not possible for a person to be truly prudent or genuinely just or really courageous if he or she does not also possess the virtue of temperance. It can be said that this virtue indirectly conditions all the other virtues. On the other hand, it also must be said that all the others are indispensable if the person is to be "temperate" (or "moderate").

The very word "temperance" seems in a way to refer to what is "external to man." We say that a person is temperate if he does not misuse food, drink and pleasures; if he does not indulge excessively in alcohol; if he does not deprive himself of the use of his faculties by means of drugs, and so on.

But this reference to things outside of the person has its basis within the person. It is as if there were in each of us a "higher self" and a "lower self." Our "lower self" gives expression to the "body" and all that belongs to it: its needs, its desires and its passions, especially those of a sensual nature.

The virtue of temperance assures the individual that the "higher self" will be in control of the "lower self."

Does this imply an abasement of our bodies? Or a depreciation of them? On the contrary! This control lifts the body to its proper level. The virtue of temperance enables the body and our senses to find the place that is rightly theirs within our human reality.

SELF-CONTROL

The temperate man is the one who is master of himself, the one in whom the passions do not gain the upper hand over reason, will or "heart." He is the man who is able to control himself! If so, we can readily understand the basic and even radical value of the virtue of temperance. It is absolutely indispensable if man is to "be" fully human.

We need only look at someone who is carried away by his passions

and becomes their "victim," as he voluntarily deprives himself of the use of reason (an alcoholic or a drug addict, for example). Then we see clearly that to "be human" requires a person to respect his own dignity and, therefore, among other things, to accept the direction given by the virtue of temperance.

This virtue also is called "sobriety," that is, moderation. For if we are to be able to control our passions, the lust of the flesh, the outbursts of sensuality (for example, in our relations with the other sex) and so on, we must not transgress proper limits in the conflicts between us and our "lower selves." If we do not respect these proper limits, we will not be in a position to be masters of ourselves.

This is not to say that the virtuous, moderate person cannot be "spontaneous," cannot enjoy, cannot express his own feelings. It does not mean that he must be insensible and "indifferent" as though he were made of ice or stone. Not at all! To be assured of this, we need only look at Jesus.

Christian morality has never been identical with stoicism.

SPONTANEITY

On the other hand, if we consider the wealth of affections and emotions with which every human being is endowed — each in his or her own way: the man in his way, the woman in hers, each because of their special sensibilities — we must recognize that the human person cannot reach a virtuous spontaneity except by continuous work on himself and by a special "watchfulness" over all he does. It is in this, as a matter of fact, that the virtue of "temperance" or "moderation" consists.

I think this virtue requires of each of us a humility specifically with regard to the gifts God has placed in our human nature. I would call it a "humility of the body" and a "humility of the heart." This humility is a necessary prerequisite if human beings are to attain to an interior "harmony" and "interior" beauty.

Let each person reflect carefully on this and, in particular, young men and even more especially young women, who are at an age when they put so much emphasis on being good-looking in order to please others! Let us remind ourselves that it is primarily within themselves that human beings should be beautiful.

Without this interior beauty, all the care taken of the body will not make the young man or young woman a truly beautiful person.

EFFECTS OF INTEMPERANCE

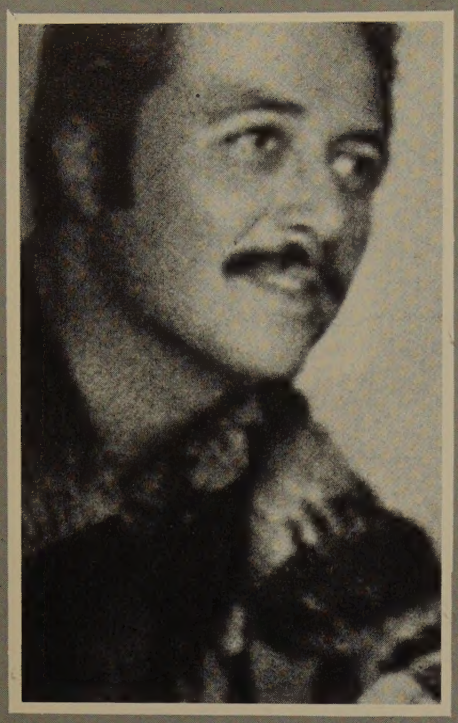
Besides, is it not precisely the body that suffers perceptible harm, and frequently such as undermines health, when a person lacks the virtue of temperance or moderation? On this point, the clinical statistics and records of the world's hospitals could tell us a great deal. Others with a lot of experience in this matter are the physicians in the consulting rooms visited by married people, engaged couples and the young.

It is true that we cannot judge of virtue solely by the criterion of psycho-physical health but there is certainly plenty of evidence that the lack of the virtue of temperance or moderation undermines health.

I must stop here, although I am sure I have not exhausted the subject but am merely breaking off the discussion of it. Perhaps the occasion will some day present itself for returning to it. For the moment what I have said must suffice.

I have endeavored in these talks to carry out as best I could the testament of John Paul I, I ask you to pray for me now that I will have to pass on to other subjects during the Wednesday audiences. ●

"A virtue is not something abstract, cut off from life. On the contrary, it has deep "roots" in life itself; it springs from life and in turn shapes it. A virtue influences the life of the person, his actions, his behavior."



Jorge Haddad

Only in darkness one can see the stars

by CARLO FUMAGALLI

Death has always been and is the most dramatic moment for each person, an experience that each one of us will make sooner or later. It can come when least expected, in the most unforseen ways: sudden at times, it takes us by surprise. At other times we are warned of its approach through illness and have a chance to prepare ourselves for the other life.

Often, when people are close to death they are not told the truth and they are kept under the illusion that they will soon be well. However, when one is helped to face reality, his or her last moments, days, weeks or even years of life can become the most precious ones.

Jorge Haddad was well aware of what was happening to him. He and his wife, Beby, were leaders of the New Family Movement in their city, Mendosa, Argentina. They had five children: Cyntia (seventeen), Andres (thirteen), Pablo (twelve), Juan (nine), and Natalia (two).

In November 1977 Jorge discovered he was affected by a serious illness. A few days later he wrote to a friend: "It is difficult to describe what I went through in the past few days, I had the impression of understanding what the encounter of the almighty God is with a human being who is all fragility, weakness and misery." It was the beginning of Jorge's very deep experience.

At first, he rediscovered the value of suffering in the life of a Christian. That month members of the Focolare Movement all over the world were living the word of life: "In my own flesh I fill up what is lacking in the sufferings of Christ . . ." (Col. 1:34)

In the letter mentioned above, he also wrote: "This month, though offering all my sufferings, I had the impression of not understanding the word of life. I do not understand things before experiencing them. But how true it is that with love one understands everything! Only in darkness can one see the stars. Today I felt a new desire to 'marry' God who is love, to 'marry' Jesus crucified and for-

saken." Jorge put all his effort in remaining faithful to God for as many days as he had to live.

Some time before, he had felt unable to live every moment for God and he had asked for the grace of being able to choose him in a new way. And the grace came, as Jorge wrote: "When the doctor told me how ill I was, I knew that God was answering my prayer, seriously and truly, as he alone can do. I was amazed to see how concrete his answer was. I understood that my sickness was the help that I had asked for. This feeling, that everything was the love of God, was stronger than my fear. It was an immense grace."

Suffering became the greatest treasure that Jorge possessed. He was not told, at first, that his illness would be fatal and undoubtedly he had some hope of recovering, but as time passed, he became more and more aware of what was ahead of him.

It was a long and slow agony, yet each day seemed to be a song celebrating life. This was possible because Jorge had been able not only to accept his suffering but also to love it.

He said: "In these days, in front of the Eucharist, I offered myself completely to God. I am overwhelmed with the desire to live, to LIVE! Last week I felt the need to prepare myself to die, but I discovered that it is much better to prepare myself to live the real life."

Later, when he was closer to death he said the following words which his family and friends now treasure almost as a testament: "I always tried to fulfill myself studying, working, building a family, giving my contribution to evangelization . . . All these things were very beautiful, but they weren't enough to fulfill me. I would like to tell everyone that I found my fulfillment only in Jesus crucified and forsaken. I am reduced to nothing, but tell everyone that I would not change my place for anything in the world because I have found my fulfillment."

Jorge experienced the preciousness of the last moments of his life. He wanted to do everything well, to live every instant to the fullest, for Jesus. He was careful to leave everything in order for the others, before his departure.

Jorge Haddad, at 41, with his wife and friends in the room where he spent the last two years of his life. Suffering transformed his family, leading everyone to live for what really counts.

He taught his wife and oldest daughter how to manage the store that he owned. One of his friends was moved by the way he did it and said: "He went over every detail with great care so that they would not run into any difficulty later. When he could not go out any more he continued to work by phone, with patience, without burdening others with his knowledge, but teaching the trade to those who would remain."

He was also concerned about his parents; he was afraid they would not be able to accept this suffering and he wanted to prepare them. Two months before dying he wrote to them: "There are events in life that put us in front of the only one who really matters: God. In our case the event is my illness. My greatest desire, my ardent desire is that also you, my dearest parents, may understand that the only one who counts is God; everything else is vanity of vanities. I know it is

hard to talk about death, but let me tell you, I am not afraid of it. My only fear is that you stop at it. Life cannot end in these few years that we spend in the world. And this can be understood if we think of what love is. How could the love that binds us die? This love, which has been rooted in God offered to God, will grow and increase in this life and in the next."

Jorge also prepared his children. In the past, for example, Cynthia, the eldest, had had some difficulty getting along with her father, but now everything was resolved. Noticing that her father was writing many letters to his friends, she asked him to write her a letter, as well. Jorge did. He began the letter by reminding her of an episode when they were both at home with the flu. They had started to send notes to each other, from one room to the next. It was a game at first, but it turned out to be a wonderful occasion to deepen their relationship.

The letter continued, "When you turned fifteen, we asked Mary for the gift of wisdom for you. It seems that Mary has answered. We have experienced that suffering teaches what nothing else can teach us; it is the greatest teacher of wisdom, and those who possess wisdom are happy . . . Who would have thought that what we asked then would have implied so much suffering? . . . I did not know then that in order to be happy, in order to possess wisdom, one had to suffer. Today I am very happy; you know how sick I am, yet I can assure you that if I had a choice I would choose the same thing."

Jorge's wife, Beby, was able to cope with the situation from the beginning to the end with the same spirit; and love among them grew stronger and deeper each day. Jorge wrote: "I have a deeper intuition of the greatness of the sacramentof Matrimony because God has united us in a new, more complete way. This illness has made me live the most wonderful moments of my life and of our marriage."

During the long period of Jorge's sickness, Beby never stopped loving. Besides taking care of the business and the whole family, she welcomed all those who came to visit and who often confided to her their own problems and sufferings. She was always kind to everyone and spent time with them as

if she had nothing else to do. Jorge wrote about her: "It is beautiful to see how Beby lives. She is like a rock. Looking at her, so strong, while I am so weak, I cannot help but think of what Mary must have been for the apostles."

If Beby, however, performed her role as a wife and mother so splendidly, Jorge, on the other hand, was able to be a good husband and father until the end despite his sickness that made him gradually weaker. He followed everything that happened in the family, trying to make sure that love was always circulating among them. When he felt that it was diminishing for some reason, he would speak with Beby or the children in order to re-establish the fullest unity. Suffering and the danger of death, always imminent, had transformed the whole family, leading everyone to live for what really counts.

"The presence of Jesus among us, that Beby and I experience so strongly in this period, "Jorge wrote, "is the only inheritance that I wish to leave to my children, the greatest and most wonderful of riches. I have a strong desire to imprint this reality in their hearts, because Jesus counts more than anything; if we are united death does not exist."

Their love was an endless witness for the many people that continued to visit them, attracted by their unity.

Toward the end, there were a few days of relief: the sickness seemed to regress thus bringing about a new joy for the whole family. It was in those days that Bishop Maresma of Mendosa, came to visit Jorge. It was a difficult moment for the country, a war seemed about to break out between Argentina and Chile and the bishop asked Jorge to pray and offer his suffering for the situation.

Then, in the evening of January 21, the final crisis came. His wife, children and parents were around him. The doctor who was attending him all of a sudden walked away in silence, unable to hide his tears.

In the last letter to his parents, Jorge had written: "Tears are shed because it is always hard to part, but the consolation of knowing that the person who died has reached the goal remains and turns into happiness. Please, I would like you to take my departure in this way . . . Also I will shed some tears, but I will go, I want to go, to God (who is happiness) . . . Thank you, thank you for everything. Let's celebrate, not mourn." •

WORD OF LIFE

Anyone
who does not welcome
the kingdom of God
like a little child
will not enter it.

(Mark 10:15)

"Anyone who does not welcome the kingdom of God like a little child will not enter it" (Mk.10:15).

Perhaps this sentence of the Gospel has never been clear to you. Maybe you would like to know the meaning of the word "child", important enough to determine for each person whether or not they enter into the kingdom of God, which we could call that place where the law of Christ is lived.

Give me your attention and I'll try to explain it.

Don't think that Jesus wants to extol the virtues of children here. He has something else in mind.

In giving a child as a model, Jesus wants to emphasize the natural disposition of children in front of adults, or in front of their parents, for example.

It's an attitude of absolute trust, or complete abandonment. Children know that their life is in the hands of someone more mature, stronger, more expert than themselves and do not doubt love.

Now, whoever you may be, even if you are an important person in the world, or you consider yourself a teacher, or if you are in a position of governing or have responsibility toward others; even if you know many languages and have traveled the world over; whether you are a scientist, philosopher, an economist, or writer, you cannot enter the kingdom of heaven if you don't become as a child before God.

"Anyone who does not welcome the kingdom of God like a little child will not enter it."

Jesus says "Anyone who does not welcome . . . "

The kingdom of God should be welcomed, therefore. It's a gift that God gives you.

In fact no human effort, no ascetic attempts, no studies or intellectual research can enable you to enter the kingdom of God. It is God himself who comes to you, who reveals himself with his light and who touches you with his grace.

And there is no merit you can boast of or depend on that can entitle you to such a gift of God. The kingdom is freely offered to you.

"Anyone who does not welcome the kingdom of God like a little child will not enter it."

To know how to accept a gift is a normal thing for a child who is in need of everything, who receives everything from others in order to survive, to grow.

Have you noticed? A child is small and he acts that way.

You, too. Don't act as the "adults" who consider themselves grown-up and important, and end up acting like that, not only with people, but also with God.

Children know that they don't know, and that they have much to learn.

You, too. Don't be as the "adults" who are rich of their own culture or their own experiences.

For a child, believing is easy. Let it be for you, too. Don't build that wall of mistrust as many people have done with the passing of time.

A child is at the start of life, open to any kind of adventure. You, too. Don't place any obstacles in the way of beginning the life of the Gospel and of continuing in the novelty of it during your life.

"Anyone who does not welcome the kingdom of God like a little child will not enter it."

Jesus said these words precisely when the disciples were preventing children from going to him. They shared the general mentality which considered children to be immature, of little account, and therefore they didn't want them to bother the Master. Instead Jesus calls them, takes them in his arms, lays his hands on them, blesses them and gives them as a model to his disciples saying: "the kingdom of God belongs to such as these."

The kingdom of God is of children as it is of the poor, the persecuted, of those who hunger and thirst for justice.

Children, therefore, hold a privileged place in the community of Christians, also because Jesus teaches us to especially love those who are left out, or who are in desperate situations, in need, or are the least.

Not only, but by their very presence, children remind you that, if you are not "like them", you can neither enter nor stay in the kingdom of God.

"Anyone who does not welcome the kingdom of God like a little child will not enter it."

Chiara Lubich

EXPERIENCES

Each month a "Word of Life" appears in Living City or in its Supplement. The following are experiences that some of our readers shared with us in living the Word of Life.

Several months ago we began preparations to move to the country. On weekends we would go to paint and prepare the house. One Saturday we had a multitude of things we wanted to accomplish, so we wanted to get an early start. Because of one thing or another, we weren't able to leave until almost noon. Since we couldn't get a babysitter we also had to take the children. I had fixed sandwiches and by the time we arrived there everyone was hungry. So . . . lunch first. Then just as we finally got started painting the baby needed a nap, so I had to stop working and put her to sleep.

I was really getting up-tight. Nothing was going right. As I rocked the baby in another room, I could hear my husband with our other two girls. I could tell that even though it was hard for him, too, he was really trying to keep charity so that we could have the presence of Jesus in our midst. So immediately I knew I had to try harder to live the present moment and not worry about what needed to be done.

When I went back to the room my husband had given a brush to each of the girls and they were very proud of the little corner they had painted. Suddenly it hit me that if I died that night God was not going to ask me if I got the house painted before we moved in or not. He would ask me if I loved my brother that day. What a joy I felt. Things didn't go as planned that afternoon, but there was an abiding joy in loving Jesus in all the things that I wasn't able to accomplish, and because we really tried to keep Jesus in our midst.

D. H.

A short time ago I attended a local Church meeting. Before the meeting started I began talking with a lady who, like myself, did not know anyone else there. As we chatted we realized we had much in common and so we carried on an easy conversation. When I learned that she was presently working for a dentist I couldn't help but mention that I also had worked for a dentist for a few months. I went on to explain that the job lasted such a short time because the dentist had a terrible short temper and was just impossible to get along with.

I had not seen this man again in years but about ten minutes after I had talked about him he walked in the door. I felt as if my conscience were tapping me on the shoulder reminding me of what I had said only a few moments earlier. I knew I had let God down in "seeking first his kingdom", for that would also have included loving and forgiving. I had failed to do that.

After the meeting I went up to this person and got re-acquainted. It seemed that we had both changed so much over the years; I actually enjoyed talking with him.

So often when we forget to love and the "old man" in us comes out, we need only to recognize it and to start to love again. God always takes care of the rest.

M. G.

I belong to a health club. On one particular afternoon I was calling the different branches to find out the size of the pool. I joined mainly to swim, and I'd heard that some pools were larger than others. The pool that I was using was not very large.

With each call I was asked if I was a member before the information was given me. By the time I made the last call I was feeling pretty indignant and even though the person who answered told me the size of the pool before asking about my membership status, I gave him a little speech getting the point across that I objected to the question. When I hung up, in my mind I tried to justify what I had said, but my heart was empty, and I had lost the joy that I had felt earlier.

I remembered the word of life which was, "Seek first the kingdom of God, and his way of holiness, and all these things will be given you besides." Immediately I saw that I had not lived this way during the phone conversation. I asked myself, "How can I live this word of life now?" To seek first the kingdom now meant to swallow my pride and make peace with that gentleman.

I made the call and apologized for the way I had spoken to him. When I hung up, I felt the joy and peace that comes when I am able to conform my life to the Gospel.

K. W.

One day I had to go to town to do a lot of errands. I knew just where to go and what to get and so, with my mother-in-law along, I expected to have a pleasant day. Everything went fine until I reached my last destination: to pick up a kit for a picnic table and

the boards to go with it, as well as drainage tile which my husband needed.

My first setback came when I realized that the store was at a new location. I didn't know the places of things and so I was at a loss trying to find what I needed. Then, they told me I'd have to get the lumber and load it myself. In the meantime, I discovered that the lumber was of very poor quality. However, we needed it, so poor quality or not I looked through the whole pile one by one and chose the five best pieces.

Little by little our spirits were going lower and lower. After my mother-in-law helped me load the lumber we moved on to look for the drainage tile. I was stunned when the man asked me to help load it onto the top of the car. Then the man said it was company policy that I would have to tie it down myself. That was too much. I didn't have the slightest idea of how to go about tying it down.

By this point my mother-in-law was as upset as I was. I remembered having seen a suggestion box in the store. "When I get home, I'm going to write them quite a letter," I told her. Then the word of life came to my mind, "Seek first his kingship over you, his way of holiness . . ." and I knew I shouldn't be so angry.

From that moment on, my attitude changed, and her attitude changed as well. We began to laugh as we tried to tie the drainage tile onto the car. We made a lot of mistakes and in so doing we used a a lot of twine and to us it became immensely funny. My mother-in-law mentioned that we had more twine than anything else and that there wouldn't be anymore left for the next person. In this happy mood we noticed the guard on duty was twisting his neck trying to watch us. He checked our load and told us we hadn't tied the back part down. So back we went and with a big smile on his face the guard came to help us. We had touched him and what could have been a discouraging experience will remain instead a pleasant memory.

B. B.

A FAMILY OF FOUR

One Monday morning we were called by our social worker and told of a newborn baby who was up for adoption and who seemed to be ideal from everyone's point of view to be placed in our home. Tuesday, in the midst of much excitement, my husband and I went to her office for the full presentation of his background. Before we left the office an appointment was made to bring the baby from the hospital on Friday morning at eleven o'clock.

Late Tuesday afternoon the social worker called and she seemed hesitant about something. Immediately I realized the situation had changed, and I remembered that the birth parents had not yet signed the consents. I also thought of the word of life which was ". . . put your gifts at the service of one another, each in the measure he has received" (1 Peter 4:10), and knew that my outlook and serenity achieved by trying to love always was a gift that I could put at his service. I then said the baby would not be coming to us on Friday under the circumstances. She replied that the situation was unclear at the moment and she would know more tomorrow.

When my husband and talked together that evening it was without regret or disappointment, since we knew we had no claim to that child. God would give us the child that he wanted us to have in his time. Wednesday the social worker called to tell us that she did not know the whole story, but that our appointment for Friday was cancelled. I told her that we had no ill feelings for having been notified too soon and that our thoughts and prayers were with the birth parents that they might have peace of mind.

Living the word of life up to this point had not been extremely difficult, although it did take effort to remain in the will of God. Things did not end here, however.

An hour later the social worker called again, and because I seemed to be a "sensible, well-balanced person" she thought I should be a part of what was going on. This time she explained the situation and offered a good deal of hope that the baby would come to us on Friday. This hope was taken away completely on Thursday when she called to say the baby had been assigned to a foster home. I had to remember that if the word of life was true on Tuesday and Wednesday, it was true also on Thursday, and I made the effort to live the word of life once again. The social worker must have felt uneasy and awkward with the situation all week because, at the end of our conversation she thanked me for the way I had responded under the circumstances.

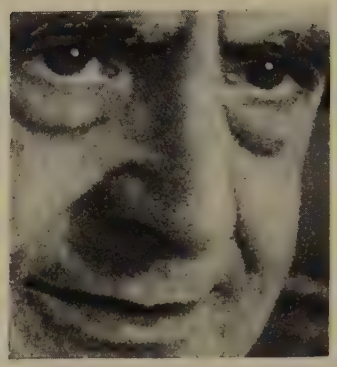
The final outcome to this experience of ours was that when I called the social worker about a month later to say "hello," she said that same couple had decided they wanted the baby to come to our home and the consents were already signed. She hadn't called because she was very much involved with another case but the placement could be made very soon.

E. S.

During these months I was pretty much taken with my work, but I had been happy with our family of three. I had a beautiful picture of our daughter with her red hair in my office. That was our family. But I felt the most important thing was that we offer our "gift", as the word of life seemed to be telling us, to another human being and in that moment I felt I had to just have confidence in God and do whatever was according to his plan and spirit. Now we have the child and he is happy. We are a family of four and we have no regrets about it.

F. S.

A universal appraisal of Paul VI



One can read numerous defenses of the Roman papacy (almost all of them written by Catholics) which often contain convincing arguments and proofs. But I find it hard to believe that even the most well-documented of these could contain proof of the vitality of pontiffs equal to that which has been put forth by the Secretariat for Christian Unity in a recent issue of its splendid periodical, "Information Service."

The publication contains a compilation of messages, telegrams and official statements of other Churches and Judaic authorities, regarding the last three popes — Paul VI, John Paul I, and John Paul II. These texts reveal a recognition of the central position and unique gifts present in the papacy.

Here we are publishing excerpts from some of the telegrams and letters which were received from other Churches after the death of Paul VI. They point out, often with rare insight, a greatness which we have not always recognized, perhaps because of our very closeness.

The personality of our brother Paul VI, wrote Patriarch Dimitrios I of Constantinople, "will remain unique in the history of Christianity and of humanity in our age."

"He was a great promoter of Christian unity and worldwide peace," confirmed the Patriarch of Antioch. And with this assessment, the Patriarch drew attention to Pope Paul's two courses of action which, in their own right, show people of every creed the value of the religious and social action of the Church of Rome. Similarly, the Patriarch of Russia, Pimen of Moscow, expressed appreciation of Pope Paul's work for peace, citing how he had established "brotherly relations between the Roman Catholic Church and the Russian Orthodox Church."

Expressions of sympathy and words of praise were also received from the Orthodox Churches of Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Bulgaria, Georgia, Athens, Ethiopia, India, and many more. They mourned the loss of a builder of universal peace: "an inspired leader of the Roman Catholic Church," stated the Metropolitan of Poland, "the Christian world has lost a great personality." "Paul VI," according to the Catholics of Armenia, "by making his own the suffering of all humanity in our tormented times, and by carrying the cross of Christ on his own shoulders, continually exuded charity and hope, peace and good will."

In the words of the Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem, Paul VI was "a great leader of the Church and a protagonist of Christian unity and world peace." "An exceptional figure," repeated the Orthodox Metropolitan of France, "a great pontiff whom history will hold as one of the most fervent artisans of Christian unity and of the unity of all mankind."

As one can see, the universal dimensions of peace, understanding and love that Pope Paul held for all the world are extolled in these condolences sent by the highest authorities of the Orthodox Church. He was, "a great servant of peace and good will among men . . . a brother and a friend," another one of them wrote.

These messages recognize the universality — that is to say, the Christian and human catholicity of the Roman papacy upon which Pope John Paul II's daily statements and speeches are conferring new power and breadth, reaching out to all levels of the world's population.

Other Churches, as well, expressed equal admiration for the late pontiff who brought about the first vigorous enactment of the Second Vatican Council. The Archbishop of Canterbury, who was conveying the sentiments expressed at the most recent Lambeth Conference,[1] praised, "the brotherly relationship" with Pope Paul VI and the deeper mutual understanding reached by the two Churches. "Paul VI was an apostle

by IGINO GIORDANI

"We do not intend to dwell on the past. We are looking rather to the future, to what the Church is called on to achieve in the future that opens up before us. The point we have reached impels us to think about what the Church and the world are expecting of us. It likewise urges us to consider the formidable problems which "the ministry of reconciliation" places before us at this particular time, which inaugurates the last quarter of this century; they are problems which we believe we can face to the extent that we have labored in complete fidelity to the Second Vatican Council. If something has been able to be accomplished with the help of all the wonderful energies in the Church and the world, this is still only a beginning, a preparation for a new increase, for a new period in which to make progress, in absolute docility to the Holy Spirit, in order to fulfill God's plan for humanity."

PAUL VI

(to the College of Cardinals, June 22, 1973 — reprint from THE POPE SPEAKS , Vol. 18, No. 2, Summer 1973)

of unity and we know well how dear to his heart was the commitment to Christian ecumenism. . .," he wrote.

He was "a great Christian leader" who forcefully sought "to reconcile the pieces of this shattered world," wrote the Secretary of the World Federation of Lutherans. He dedicated his entire long life "to the service of humanity . . . and millions of people looked upon him as a spiritual leader, an example of unselfishness, devotion and courage," declared the Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

The World Council of Churches acknowledged the "great loss" of a pope who had so greatly desired to concretize the ecumenism espoused by the Second Vatican Council and who had promoted mutual understanding among Churches "with a dedication demonstrated by a life of profound devotion, humility, and strict adherence to the Church's mission of evangelical witness." Through these efforts he hoped to serve the cause of world peace.

"He encouraged a more vigorous defense of justice for the poor and oppressed," they wrote. Through the encyclical "Development of Peoples", his personal example, and his ardent desire for peace, "he left a profound impression on an age in which relations among peoples are in a state of extreme fragility."

The service he rendered toward world peace and the halting of the arms race, his contribution to the development and a more just organization of the Third World nations was particularly stressed by the leaders of the Christian Conference for Peace.

Pope Paul VI was the first pontiff to visit Africa; in addition, he brought the African clergy into the heart of ecclesiastical organizations as well as into modern culture. This praise came from the Secretary General of the African Conference.

The leaders of the Young Men's Christian Association stated that his death was "a great loss for Christianity and for the world."

Here I have mentioned only a few thoughts from some of these messages; however, one cannot help being moved by the unanimity of regret expressed by these persons and Churches, which are not Catholic, and by their recognition of Pope Paul's service both in the field of ecumenism and in the endeavor to reconcile all peoples. It is an acknowledgement of his gifts of prudence and courage as leader of humanity which, although still ravaged by the passions of war, is on its way toward unity.

This unanimity of opinion on the part of so many persons, admirers of Pope Paul VI's remarkable merits, clearly shows that he was regarded as an extraordinary world peacemaker.

"Without hesitation, he can be characterized as the pope of the renewal of the Roman Catholic Church; the pope of reconciliation among Christians; the pope of agreement and cooperation among all religions; a defender and artisan of human dignity, who showed preference for the downtrodden; he heralded human rights and the elimination of racial discrimination; he was a defender of religious freedom, and a champion of peace throughout the world."

This recognition included in the official statement of Dimitrios I, truly evokes the often quoted phrase, "the voice of the people is the voice of God."

These sentiments, expressed by such authoritative voices (to which can be added those of Jews and other faiths) join with the voices of very many people who, even if not Catholic, mourned, this father of extraordinary strength. His was a strength of love, that only the Holy Spirit could have formed, that Spirit of God who has made of Pope John Paul II a formidable successor to Pope Paul VI. ●

1) Assemblies of the bishops of the whole Anglican Communion, held about once every ten years at Lambeth Palace under the Presidency of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Mothers, fathers and their responsibilities

INTERVIEW WITH DRS. JOHN AND EVELYN BILLINGS

When the topic of birth control is discussed in current literature only certain methods are mentioned: the pill, the I.U.D., the various mechanical and chemical devices, and even sterilization. Natural methods, if they are covered at all, almost invariably end with comments such as: "difficult to apply" or "has a high rate of failure."

In the last few years, however, a growing number of research scientists, alarmed by the ecological consequences on the population as a result of the use of contraceptives such as the pill, have become interested in the "natural methods". In fact, the World Health Organization (WHO) is conducting a research program on these methods and especially on verifying the "ovulation method" or "Billings method", named after the Australian couple who studied

From the left: Drs. Evelyn and John Billings (Australia), Dr. Mercedes Wilson (U.S.A.) and Dr. Anna Cappella (Italy), during a recent convention held at the Catholic University of Rome on the natural methods of birth control.

"I have always had the deep belief that God is a God of love. Therefore, his laws are laws of love. By observing his laws, we learn how to love. If we can help someone live with love the laws of God, this is the greatest act of charity that we are able to do for that person."

this method and have made it internationally known.

A high level scientific conference dealing with this topic was recently held in Rome at the Catholic University School of Medicine. During the conference the results of the research conducted by the World Health Organization according to rigorous scientific criteria were made known. In five countries of widely different cultures: New Zealand, Ireland, India, the Philippines, and San Salvador it was found that the "ovulation method," when correctly used, proved to be 98.5 percent effective in the cases tested. The results confirmed those obtained by Dr. Billings and by other researchers.

Both Drs. John and Evelyn Billings participated in the conference and presented scientific documentation on their work and the successive refinements in their method which resulted in its present form. They gave the history of their research.

In 1953 the Rev. Maurice Catarinich, a marriage counselor for the Catholic Family Welfare Bureau of Melbourne, interested Dr. John Billings in the study of problems of birth control.

They first oriented themselves toward verifying calculations of the rhythm method, which had been the object of a great deal of criticism. It was felt many "failures" were due to errors in the teaching of the method or in understanding the method, besides failures due to weaknesses in the method itself. They then enlarged their field of research to the symptoms of the basal body temperature and of the cervical mucus until they arrived at an always more precise definition of the limits of the fertile phase of the menstrual cycle. An important turn in their research came about through the collaboration of James B. Brown, a professor of chemical biology at the University of Melbourne, who was able to give scientific confirmation to the validity of the method through new and numerous kinds of laboratory tests.

At a certain point, Dr. John Billings involved his wife Evelyn, who is also a physician, in his research. It was through her that he realized the advantages of having women teaching other women in this area; the teaching would be more readily accepted and many problems would disappear. Dr. Evelyn Billings extended the studies to include the entire reproductive cycle of women.

Other collaborators joined them and the field of research grew. Dr. Kevin Hume studied the most effective means of teaching the program. Dr. Mercedes Wilson from the United States recognized the simplicity of the method and its adaptability to all couples regardless of education. The widespread knowledge of the method in developing countries is due largely to Dr. Wilson's merit.

The Billings couple impressed the listeners with their serenity and humility; as people who are not seeking their own glory but are seeking to promote something which would help many couples in many parts of the world.

Their home is in Melbourne, Australia. Tall, not showing their sixty odd years, the Billings' are typically Anglosaxon. They are people who inspire trust. They immediately give you the impression of being very happily married. Here are their answers to our questions:

Question: Why did you begin this research?

Evelyn Billings: There were many reasons. One came from a priest in Melbourne, Father Catarinich. He was concerned with the problems in families. When he began this work twenty-five years ago he encountered only problems, and big ones, at that. He turned to us for help. We told him frankly, "We know very little; however, we'll see what we can do." John and Father Catarinich began to work together. Many years after they asked me to help them.

The second reason. We felt an obligation to get involved. This type of research is not the type I would have chosen. However, the people we were trying to help had very serious problems. It was only little by little that we were able to find a solution. We were convinced that there was an answer; however, it had seemed always a little beyond our present capabilities and knowledge. Later we saw these problems gradually disappear with the collaboration of the same people we were trying to help.

John Billings: The good people we were trying to help motivated me to continue in this work. I listened to their problems. I realized that although the providence of God is working in all our lives, we find

Dr. Cappella, director of Family Counseling at the Gemelli Polyclinic in Rome, was the organizer of the convention on natural methods of birth control.

ourselves immersed in many different situations without knowing why. I didn't know why many people must face great difficulties that have never been asked of me. They were good, simple people and they were asking us for help. We couldn't refuse them.

I could see the power of love operating in their lives. At times one of Hans Christian Anderson's fables came to mind where the frog is turned into a handsome prince by love. I believe that love can transform each of us into a prince or princess.

I have always had the deep belief that God is a God of love. Therefore, his laws are laws of love. By observing his laws, we learn how to love. If we can help someone live with love the laws of God, this is the greatest act of charity that we are able to do for that person.

The progress and growth of this work has taken us by surprise, and, at times, has frightened us. I am convinced, however, that this is a responsibility we cannot evade simply because we see our inadequacies. It cannot be an excuse for twiddling our thumbs.

It has been very difficult for us to get used to the publicity; but it has been impossible to avoid it. We didn't want to give our name to the method, but it was necessary to do so. Someone who knew of our method was presenting it in a distorted manner, in a way that could discredit it. We had to intervene. Others in the field of family planning wished to combine our method with the usual methods of contraceptives. Again we had to impose our authority and say no.

Question: Have their been problems in making the method known?

John Billings: Yes, we have encountered tremendous opposition. We have been called names, we have not been believed, we have found ourselves even with enemies. At times it's easy to see from where the opposition is coming. For example, the strong economic interests behind the usual contraceptive methods: or from our permissive society. Some have been hostile to us because they oppose the Catholic Church and, in other cases, we find opposition even among Catholics who oppose the Church's teachings in this area.

Evelyn Billings: Perhaps we can excuse this attitude at times. Some people may have received the false impression that there could not be a solution in accordance with the teachings of the Church in the areas of birth control. However, neither the opposition nor the various difficulties stopped us because of the profound faith we have in a God who loves man and who certainly desires his welfare. Also, we've been traveling the world and we have encountered friendship and collaboration. It confirmed our experience of the goodness of people.

Question: Your studies and research began before the Encyclical "Humanae Vitae" was issued. What significance did this document by Pope Paul VI have for you?

John Billings: During the course of our work we have seen couples who were using methods following the Church's teachings and couples who used or tried methods that were not morally acceptable for a Christian. The latter were not truly solutions to the problems of the family. Personally we were convinced that the teaching of the Church would not be changed despite the fact that there were many persons around us who felt change would soon come.

I reread the words of the Gospel in which Jesus affirmed Peter's authority in guiding the Church. I knew the Pope gave tremendous importance to this problem; that he was thinking and praying. I expected that when he would speak, he would place his full authority behind his teachings. I realized also that my judgment might be mistaken. I prayed with faith to have the strength to accept whatever the Pope would say. When the Encyclical was issued, we read it with the greatest joy.

Question: In the last ten years there has been a massive campaign waged by those who favor

The Drs. Billings (right) have given their name to the well-known natural method of birth control. The motivation behind their research was to help people to solve their family problems while remaining faithful to the laws of God.

contraceptives, the pill, etc., for the regulation of births. The amount of publicity has been impressive. Until recently your group would seem to be as David fighting Goliath. Listening to the speakers at this conference, however, we understand that the knowledge of your method has spread into many parts of the world. Could you tell us in which countries your method has received the widest acceptance?

John Billings: The greatest response has been from the developing countries. I believe it is for this reason: the people in these countries realize that their greatest treasure is their children. Europe has been the slowest to accept the natural methods. Our experience has been, however, that there are couples everywhere who are eager to learn of natural methods of regulating births and who wish to be instructed in the methods and and apply them in their lives.

The method we propose solves the problems of many couples; however, it does more than this. Applying this method teaches the husband and wife to increase their love for one another. This is marvelous. (Many times during the conference the Billings' underlined the importance of involving not only the woman but also her spouse in the instruction because the results depend on their fully shared responsibility. They were saying, "Yes, the application of the method enhances the love and dialogue between husband and wife. The weight of responsibility becomes lighter when shared by both of them. They confront every difficulty as something to be overcome together. Obstacles appear insurmountable if they are confronted alone. In love, generosity is always answered with love").

Sr. Frances Kearn shared her experience of teaching the method in San Salvador. There the majority of couples are not married. The application of the method awakened in these couples a new appreciation of the wisdom and teachings of the Catholic Church. After a short time, Sr. Frances noted that these couples eventually asked to be married in Church and to have their children baptized. Even vocations to religious life are coming from these families.

Throughout the world there is now considerable movement away from contraceptives. In India the greatest percentage of the population using the "ovulation method" are Hindu and Muslim. One time while in Calcutta I visited the convent of Mother Teresa. A group of Hindu women, some with small babies in their arms, arrived at the door. They had heard of the Australian doctor who came to save their husbands from sterilization and they wished to thank me.

Question: I heard that you adopted a child. . .

Evelyn Billings: We have nine children and we thank God for each one of them. Now they are grown with seven already starting their own families. They are truly loving children. Eight are ours and one is adopted . . .

John Billings: Evelyn was working in a hospital when a baby girl was born there. The child was three months old and not doing well. Lyn said she wanted to bring her home to care for her. I reminded her that we already had many children of our own. She replied, "Maybe there is someone who could adopt her." But no one came forward to adopt her and she required considerable care.

We asked our children (the youngest was two years old, the eldest sixteen), "We have to decide altogether if we should take this baby into our family. Each of you will have to make some sacrifices. Raise your hand if you wish momma to bring her home." All of them raised their hands; it was a great joy for us. Now she is a fine young woman who works as a nurse with handicapped children.

Question: We have been deeply impressed by the love you have for you fellow man. . .

Evelyn Billings: I think all of this has happened because we have learned much, so very much, from all the persons we have met who know how to love one another. I truly believe this work has made us better persons. ●

The uneven distribution of the world's energy resources is making it urgent for each nation to formulate a well-considered energy policy free of false ideological or emotional biases.

OUR DEPENDENCE ON ENERGY

BY PIERO PASOLINI

Energy has become a main concern, since the onset of the "energy crisis" a few years ago. We have been dramatically made aware of our dependence on energy, both because of its increasing cost to us and the prospect we face of rapidly diminishing supplies of oil, natural gas, etc..

What is meant by the word "energy"? Two or three centuries ago the science of mechanics, the science of motion and force, was being developed. The concept of energy has traditionally been linked to one of man's chief activities, that is, work. Energy is defined as the capacity for doing work.

Work, in its turn though, is defined by using another concept — that of "force". Man has always felt that to do physical work, he must apply force: to pull a cart you need the force of your muscles or those of an animal; likewise you use force to till the soil or tear down trees. These common experiences and countless others were analyzed scientifically and the basic concepts formed were organized into the science of mechanics. Physicists adopted some basic concepts which are undefinable by themselves, but are used to define each other.

A chain of concepts was established. Energy is the capacity for doing work. Work is the action of a force which moves something (a mass) a certain distance. Force is the capacity of a mass to cover a certain amount of space within a certain time. Mass is the quantity of matter in a body as measured in its relation to inertia (the tendency of matter to remain at rest if at rest, or if moving, to keep moving in the same direction). Space and time are basic concepts that are not defined.

As we can see, these concepts are either indefinable, or, they can be defined in relationship to each other. Definitions with phrases such as "the capacity of" or "measured in relation to" might make us wonder if mechanics is indeed founded on a solid scientific base. Employing these concepts, however undefinable as they may be, scientists have constructed the immense pyramid of scientific knowledge which underlies today's complex civilization.

In itself the matter is easy to understand: The starting point of scientific knowledge cannot be only from the undefinable definition of the "prime entities" but rather by determining the development of their relationship which is usually expressed mathematically. The concepts of work, force, mass, space, and time (the last two being the most basic and essential) have been formed through centuries-old daily experience. They are basic concepts that are simply taken as they are; even though they are refined and corrected gradually as the meaning and nature of their relationships are understood.

But let us turn from these abstract considerations (which I've dealt with in a very general manner) and consider energy in a more concrete way, that is, as that "entity" which makes the world "work". In the field of mechanics, energy is none other than the capacity of a certain force to do work, as was stated before. Potential energy exists in an entity or a body because of its position or condition; the force exists although movement is hindered in some way. Kinetic energy is that energy of a body which results from its motion. A block of iron in my hand possesses a certain potential energy relative to my foot on the floor. As soon as I let it go it possesses kinetic energy, because of its motion. It falls on my foot . . . , heating it. Here I used a kind of force, which is the weight of the block, and a type of energy, heat. Since there are many different kinds of forces in the universe and, therefore, many kinds of energy, our discussion could become infinitely complex.

The weight of an object on earth is a measure of the force with which the earth attracts all things to itself. About three centuries ago Newton defined this attraction in terms of "universal gravitation",

Photo United Nations

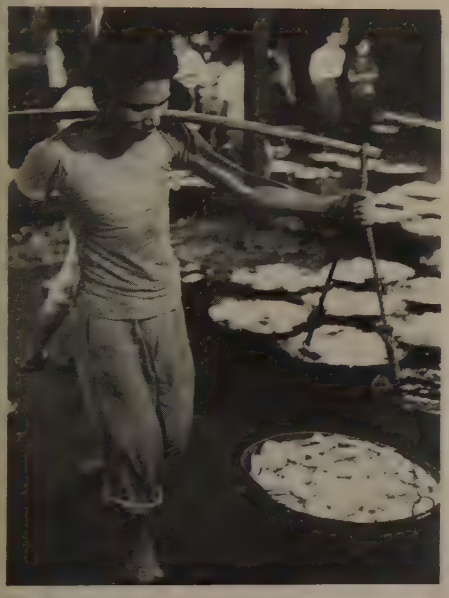


Photo United Nations

Photo United Nations

Energy is the capacity for doing work. Work is the action of a force which moves something (a mass) a certain distance. Force is the capacity of a mass to cover a certain amount of space within a certain time.

Gravitational force results in gravitational energy. There is gravitational energy in water which "falls" from the mountain. When forced through the conduit into the turbines, it generates electrical energy.

which is the force by which every mass or particle of matter attracts, and is attracted by, every other mass or particle of matter. On the basis of this concept he explained the movements of the stars and the heaviness of an object or person on earth. Gravitational force results in gravitational energy. There is gravitational energy in a meteor which, upon falling, creates a crater; or in the rock which falls on my foot; or, more usefully, in water which "falls" from the mountain and is forced through the conduit into the turbines in order to generate electrical energy. To summarize: since in nature there exist gravitational, electrical, magnetic and nuclear forces, there is gravitational, electrical, magnetic and nuclear energy. (Chemical, elastic and radiant energy are included in electromagnetic energy since the forces which interact among the atoms are electrical and magnetic.)

All the different forms of energy can be totally transformed into heat, in one way or another. Heat, however, can never be totally transformed into another form of energy. Even the conversion from one type of energy into another causes some portion to be transformed into heat. In the study of thermodynamics, which is the science which deals with heat energy, we have learned that the heat energy of a solid, liquid, or gaseous body is the sum of the kinetic energy of its atoms or molecules. In other words, the heat of a body is determined by the speed, or vibration, of its smallest particles.

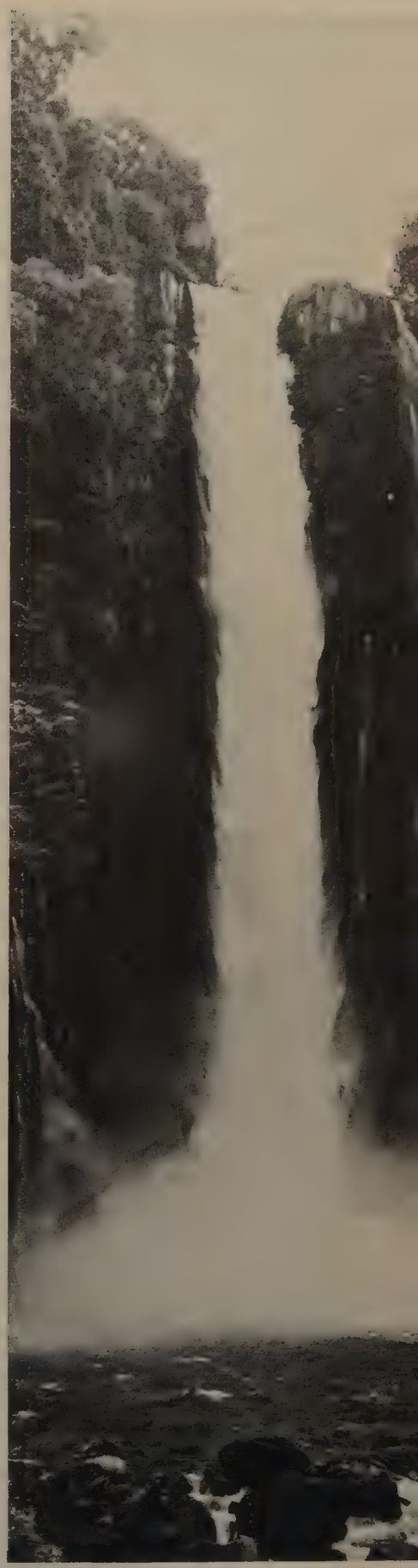


Photo United Nations

In the collision of two perfectly elastic bodies (for example, two "ideal" steel balls), the kinetic energy of one is completely transferred to the other ball, which would then travel with the original velocity of the first. The same thing does not happen when a ball of steel collides with a ball of soft lead. The kinetic energy of the steel ball which is well-ordered and directed, upon impact with the lead, breaks up in a disorderly and chaotic way into energy divided among billions of atoms. The soft lead ball does not move; but, instead, gets warmed. Its warmed atoms could never move together in an orderly way and in the same direction in order to swing back to the steel ball. Even in the case of two actual steel balls, a small portion of their kinetic energy is transformed into heat because no body is perfectly elastic.

This example gives some understanding of the process that results in every type of energy eventually becoming heat, that is, the ordered situation eventually becomes disordered. The first law of thermodynamics states that the total energy within an isolated system of bodies remains constant, no matter what energy transformations take place within it. The second law, however, states that once the system is "open", or no longer isolated, all forms of energy are eventually transformed into heat which gradually causes the entire system to come to uniform temperature. Therefore, the energy degrades to a situation where it is no longer useful for doing work. This degradation into heat energy we call entropy.

This does not mean that heat cannot be put to work. On the contrary, this happens constantly in internal combustion engines and gas and steam turbines. Here the energy furnished is only partly converted to another type of energy; the rest remains as waste heat and is discarded. In the cylinder of an engine, the gas molecules have a high temperature (high speed) and push the piston down, cooling off in the process. When they exit from the exhaust pipe they are still very hot and carry away heat which has not been utilized.

Even life requires energy and obtains it from the chemical reactions of the metabolism. No matter how perfect the living thermal machine, more than 50% is irreversibly thrown away as heat. We are "warm" because, even in us, the second principle of thermodynamics is operating, even in us, entropy exists.

In our everyday life everything we do requires energy. Mechanical energy is used for the transportation and manufacturing of materials, for heating, and, paradoxically, for cooling. Today about 85% of our energy requirements come from some type of thermal reaction. By heating coal, hydrocarbons, or atomospheric oxygen to a high temperature we are able to utilize their chemical energy to operate vehicles of transportation and electric power plants.

The motor of a car, when it is working well, transforms into mechanical energy only 30% of the heat furnished by combustion. The remaining 70% is lost. A thermal electric power plant has a maximum yield of only 40%.

Part of our electric energy is produced in hydroelectric power plants. In them gravitational energy from waterfalls is transformed into electric energy through groups of turbine generators. Its yield is a little more than 80%. It is not 100% because even here a portion of energy is lost to heat from friction, from heated cables and from other sources.

Some time ago the first project for utilizing the forces in the nucleus of the atom was developed. These are forces of tremendous intensity, about one hundred times greater than the electromagnetic forces, that bind protons and neutrons in atomic nuclei. This force is so concentrated that once its energy is released, it is millions of times more efficient than gasoline on a weight basis. The fission of one kilogram of uranium 235, produces about three million times the energy of one kilogram of gasoline; one kilogram of heavy hydrogen produces ten million times more energy.

Although the energy in a nuclear reactor is originally of electromagnetic or kinetic energy, the final product is an immense, concentrated quantity of heat. This heat is utilized by steam turbine generators to produce electric power.

There are other energy sources in nature: thermal energy (including geothermal, solar, and marine) and mechanical energy (including the wind and the tides). However, compared to the tremendous energy needs of the present and, even more, of the future, these sources can supply only scant percentages of our needs. Even hydroelectric energy could not yield more than 10% of our energy needs for the year 2000.

Looking at the situation for the next fifty years, there seem to be only two energy sources that can be counted on to supply the bulk of our energy needs: petroleum — coal, and nuclear energy. It is predicted that our supplies of petroleum will be exhausted in fifty years. The world's coal supplies should last for a few hundred years. The development of two new types of nuclear reactors is being pursued in various countries: the "breeder reactor" and the "fusion" reactor using heavy hydrogen, and having the potential of very little pollution. These energy sources would have no limits, since they would not consume a scarce resource.

Petroleum, coal and uranium, unfortunately, are badly distributed in the world. There are many nations which are practically without them. Our energy policy, and that of every country, must be well considered and free of any false ideological or emotional biases while we await the day when heavy hydrogen (there is enough of this everywhere) will be usable in fusion reactors. In the meantime our policy must have a prudent balance between our dependence on petroleum, coal, and uranium. ●

By M.A. FITZMAURICE

The story of a small town girl who found a great ideal which led her beyond the barriers that separate people.

CHICAGO AFRICA THE WORLD

I am the fourth of seven children from a small town outside of Chicago. We were always very close, with a rather normal amount of fighting and arguing for a household of three boys and four girls.

As for me, you might say that I was a "good kid." I generally listened to my parents and did what they said. I was good at school and didn't give anyone too much trouble.

All of us went to the local grammar school in our town. Many times I would have one of the teachers that my brothers or sisters had. They would say, "You are a Fitzmaurice" and I would say yes, but I also had goals of my own.

In this small town I went to school with the same students nearly all eight years of grammar school and played with the same kids in the neighborhood. You could say that Hazelcrest, "my home town", was my world with my family and friends.

It was when I started my freshman year of high school that I became aware of what was outside the boundaries of my small town. There were 5,000 students at the school and almost every day there was some type of violence. There was considerable fighting among the students and between the students and teachers. It all made me more sensitive to the violence and hatred that existed in the world. I used to think, "If the world is like this now, what will it be like ten years from now?" I wanted to change the world, but I didn't know how.

Two years earlier, my mom had met some people from the Focolare when they had been invited to speak at a nearby parish. My mother had taken us children along but we had stayed outside to play. I remember meeting those people and being struck by their smiles.

For the next two years, my mom remained in contact with the Focolare by phone because she was sick off and on and rarely left Hazelcrest. Then, one Sunday afternoon, two young women from the Focolare came to the house to visit. It was an unusual day. Our Great Dane had had seven puppies about a month before and they were all running around the house. We also had people coming to the house to buy the puppies, but when these two young women arrived at the door and smiled, I remembered that same smile from two years before and I was curious to know what made them so happy. I really felt their love that day. We had givgiven them some cake but before they even had a chance to eat it, our gigantic dog had hopped onto the lap of one of them and ate the cake right off her plate. We were horrified and would have been even more embarassed had we known, at the time, that she was afraid of dogs; yet she went ahead talking as if to have a dog at the table for tea were the most normal thing in the world.

They invited us to attend the Mariapolis that was going to be held on the East Coast that year. My mom, my three sisters and I went and we were all impressed by the atmosphere of love we found there. I was struck by the idea that if I wanted to change the world I had to begin by changing myself.

I also realized that the peace and joy I had seen came from loving, and I felt that I wanted to live like that, too, that I wanted to try it out.

When we returned home from the Mariapolis, we were very enthusiastic and I began telling my dad and three brothers all about it. But they didn't want to listen. It was then that I understood that I shouldn't speak about loving, I had to love.

My sisters and my mom also started with me. This life based on the Gospel brought us all closer together in those not-so-easy years when we were growing up.

I also started meeting with the Gen because I wanted to know more about how they lived. It gave me hope and courage to know that there were young people trying to live for unity.

Mary Anne Fitzmaurice at 16. "I was struck by the idea that if I wanted to change the world I had to begin by changing myself."

In September I returned to school with a different attitude and my desire to love as Jesus taught us was soon tested. I was in the cafeteria eating lunch with my friends when trouble broke out. An argument started between two different groups of students who had been fighting all year long. Suddenly metal chairs were thrown into the air and everyone began running toward the doors. My friends and I started to run, too, but I didn't make it. I was hit over the head with a chair and I collapsed on the floor. Soon the police arrived to restore order and I was taken to the infirmary.

On the way there I caught a glimpse of myself in the mirror. My face was swollen and my sweater was covered with blood; my head throbbed terribly. I was frightened, but when someone asked me what I would do to get back at the students who had hit me, I didn't feel any anger or resentment in my heart. But many thoughts were going through my mind. Would the school be closed down? Would I be alright? I didn't know. There was only the present that I could try to live by loving.

In the other two beds of the infirmary there were two girls that

Left: Chicago. At 18 Mary Anne who had never left her family before, flew from Chicago to Africa. She spent a year and a half in a Focolare Center in the Valley of the Bangwa (West Cameroon). Right: a typical dance of the Bangwa people. On the preceding page the palace of the king of the tribe.

were with the group that had thrown the chairs. One of them was crying and badly shaken. I began to talk to her, trying to calm her down. Some friends of mine who were standing by my bed became furious. They walked out and left me saying, "You must be out of your mind." I was shocked and felt miserable and alone. And yet I knew I couldn't give up.

Soon my mother came and took me to the hospital. When I returned to school after three weeks I felt that everyone was watching me. Did they think I had been a part of the trouble? Were they wondering if I would bring charges against those who had hurt me? I felt like screaming and telling everyone, "No, I did not start any trouble, no, I am not going to take revenge. Someone has to stop hating." But I remembered how little words always worked and I did not say anything — I went ahead loving everyone as concretely as I could, trying to become a bridge between the two groups.

Then, something else happened. It had usually been my mother who was sick but now unexpectedly a tumor was found on my father and the doctors advised him to immediately go to a special hospital in another state. Besides that, we found ourselves financially unprepared because our insurance would re-imburse us later but that hospital required immediate payment.

I had always heard about the early Christians, that they were all one heart and one mind, sharing everything in common. But now I understood it because, in the community of people of the Focolare, I seemed to see the experience repeated.

A newly-wed couple preparing to buy a home came forward saying they wanted to give us the money instead, and a whole network of love went into action as others offered to take care of us children while my parents were away. My parents left with the money, with all seven of us being taken care of, and with the love and prayers of all these people supporting them.

All this helped me to see that just to be "good" wasn't enough anymore. I couldn't just try to love by myself: there were other people around me and I understood that we have to go to God together. I began to understand, also, that unity Jesus prayed for before dying, and I wanted to live for it.

Mary Anne Fitzmaurice today, "I experience each day the freedom of loving and living in order to reach 'that all may be one.'"

Soon after I graduated from high school. My family decided to move to California and I was to go with them and start college there. During the years,though, the Gen, together with the other members of the Focolare Movement all over the world, had been working on a special project called "Operation Africa." There is a tribe in the middle of the jungle in Fontem, West Cameroon called the Bangwa tribe where an alarmingly high percentage of their children were dying of different childhood diseases.

Because of this tragic situation, the king of the tribe, the "Fon" as he is called gathered his people altogether to pray that someone would come to their rescue. For a year the entire Bangwa people prayed. But the year passed and nothing happened. After a second long year of prayer, they began to wonder why God had not yet answered them. Their conclusion was that they would have to find people more worthy and ask them to pray.

A collection was made of various gifts and the king offered it to the Catholic bishop, asking him to pray to God for help. The bishop tried to find a way to help them. While in Rome, he had come to know of Chiara Lubich and the Focolare Movement.

When Chiara heard about the plight of the Bangwa people, she sent members of the Movement who were doctors and nurses. A temporary clinic was soon set up and the Bangwa people felt that God was finally answering their prayers. The doctors and nurses tried to really love each patient without speaking about Christianity. Soon, though, the people saw how they loved one another and they began to ask why. In a short time, large numbers became Christians.

And so it became a project of the Gen Movement all over the world to help this tribe. In Chicago, we Gen also wanted to do what we could to help.

My sisters and I thought that what we could do for Operation Africa was to raise puppies. Our Great Dane dog was a thoroughbred Harlequin. So we decided that we could sell her puppies and use the proceeds. It turned out to be quite an experience though. Soon after giving birth to six puppies, the mother died. We then had to feed and take care of all these puppies, and to find buyers for them. We were so happy in the end to have raised that money.

We were always glad to receive news of what was happening in Fontem and how the hospital was progressing. We also heard that some Gen were going there for a year or two to live and help. When I heard this, I felt that I should go there instead of moving to California. My parents were happy to see me so happy.

I left Chicago in December, flying to Douala and then traveled by jeep for about seven hours before reaching Fontem. The Mariapolis was just about to begin there. I felt that I had left my family, but I had found another family. People, in fact, were beginning to arrive from many different African nations to attend the Mariapolis. I noticed that even though the customs and surroundings may differ, the Mariapolises held all over the world have the same spirit.

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THE BEST GIFT

THE STORY OF A MAN'S DETERMINATION TO "LOVE HIS ENEMIES" IN BOTH VICTORY AND RESOUNDING DEFEAT.

by GIANNETTO CASOLI

I have known Luciano for a long time, which for me meant to witness a tremendous change over the years. What he shared with me was always authentic and simple, a source of wonder and a real personal gift. Here's his story:

"For some time there had been an ever-growing desire to draw closer to Jesus and this desire led me to the sacraments. How could I have filled this longing to love him back, he who had loved me in such a pure, absolute and perfect way, if not by going to him and being nourished by him every day?

I found great joy and an immense inner strength. To love and to be loved by Jesus in spite of my failings and limitations made me feel as though I were launched into the infinite. These were moments in which he seemed to reveal all his beauty, and it was great to discover that I could be, that I actually was part of it. But at times God can take this beautiful reality away from us and leave us, then, with such a sense of nostalgia that on returning to our normal activities we can't stop

"The person who opened the door was very surprised to see me . . . Without inviting me in she asked me what was the matter. I replied that nothing was the matter, only that I didn't want to celebrate Easter without first coming to bring my good wishes to them."

(Drawing by Paolo Scirpa)

trying to find a way to re-establish the beautiful relationship we had begun to experience. He himself allows us to feel this way so that the experience of strength and serenity which he had given us as a free gift may become an incentive for us to live a life patterned after the very life of Jesus.

So I knew that if I wanted to continue this newly-found relationship with God, it was now my turn to find the right connection between his words and my actions and give concrete substance to a love which up to now had been merely contemplative: strong enough to make me feel a great attraction, but not strong enough to fulfill me. In the long run, continuing to be on the receiving end would have no sense. Not only, but that burning love would have probably died, unless it were kept alive with great care. What I mean to say is that Jesus was asking me to collaborate; he had so thoroughly fascinated me that, with my free will, I "had" to say "yes" to him.

I knew that it wasn't going to be an easy life because I would have to lose my pride. But it was Jesus again who made me understand that a person will find himself and will come to know the goal of his existence, only if he, like Jesus, can become "love for love's sake". I often repeated this phrase to myself, but it was only as Easter drew near that I understood what it meant for me: I felt I had to place myself in front of him and make my offering with all my credentials in good order.

At that time I realized that they were only apparently in good order, according to my own standards, but that this was no longer sufficient. Up to that time I had never thought that Jesus' words "Leave your gift at the altar and first go to be reconciled with your brother" had any bearing on my life, I had interpreted them in my own way. But I began to see everything in a new light. The word of life of that month was, "He had loved his own in this world, and would show his love for them to the end" and, for the first time it was no longer something only to be read, and then put aside. It involved my whole being. The word of life, in fact, became part of my very self, without which I could not live, or at least find purpose to my existence.

I felt in that moment, that not only did I have to make the word of life for that month my own, but that it also reminded me of a previous word of life "Love your enemies". I couldn't live one if I didn't live the other "to the end".

So I got down to the task right away with great enthusiasm but, alas, I discovered that I had quite a long list of enemies. I got discouraged, and a bit overwhelmed by the thought. At most I could forgive those toward whom I felt guilty, (and they seemed few in my opinion), but assuming responsibility where I did no wrong, and even ask for forgiveness was absurd. It was the "old man" who certainly was protesting with all his might. I spent a day in turmoil. I didn't go to mass as usual and therefore missed communion. I felt unworthy to receive this gift. But what good did this accomplish? Certainly none for me and none for God, because I'm sure that wasn't his will either.

This thought helped me to start all over again. Immediately I felt an even greater love and readiness to meet the difficulties ahead of me. I knew that I would have to go and find my "enemies" and I got up my courage to start out with those for whom I had been nurturing a deep dislike for a long time. Don't think it wasn't difficult. It was difficult and how!

I remember that my heart raced and my knees shook a bit as I stood before the door of each one of them. I was afraid that they would take me for crazy or at least turn me down. But something unexpected happened as the first door opened. Before I had a chance to say a word, the person said "welcome" and without waiting to hear why I had come or what I had to say, assured me that he himself would have done anything to have an opportunity to talk with me, and still without letting me open my mouth, went to call his nine year old son to meet me, who was his godfather. In fact it was almost since the time of the christening that relations with the parents had become strained. At this point I was puzzled. I had come to say something — but what? There was nothing more to say. We left each other with the promise to meet often and to strengthen our newly recomposed friendship.

After this first happy experience, I set out with a heart full of joy to knock at the door of another family with which there had been a disagreement. The person who opened the door was very surprised to see me, evidently she could think of no reason for this unexpected visit of mine. Without inviting me in, she asked me what was the matter. I replied that nothing was the matter, only that I didn't want to celebrate Easter without first coming to bring my good wishes to them, as well. This seemingly small effort was enough to melt the ice which had made the relationship between us impossible for quite some time.

I wish to emphasize, though, that these successes were not as easily achieved as it might seem from this story. My desire for reconciliation was also regarded, especially at first, with some distrust and even hostility.

There was this woman for instance who did not trust my sincerity in seeking to restore peace. Every time I met her, she would look the other way, or if she did look at me she would have a sour expression on her face. I knew that she went to mass in a certain church at a certain time. So I went too. When the priest invited us to share a sign of peace, I stretched out my hand to her and she responded. It may seem a trifle, yet from that day on, that lady returns my greeting. She told me later, that she would never have believed that it took so little for her to forget the past and because of this experience, she became a more trusting person.

But then, one of my attempts at reconciliation met with refusal and

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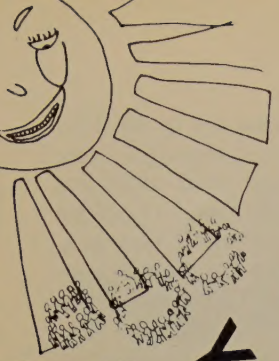

THE VERY YOUNG AND THE GOSPEL

I go to Catholic school and we have school masses once in a while. During one of those masses I was sitting next to both of my friends. The priest was reading a letter to us during the homily. This letter was about a girl named Maureen (the same as me). She was exactly like me and she died two weeks after her graduation. I wanted to talk to my friend about it but I knew I wouldn't be listening and getting something from this homily. I didn't talk to my friend and I was happy. I also had the urge to talk on the line going to Communion, but I decided that I wouldn't talk because that would break the unity I felt with Jesus. I didn't talk and I knew that I was ready to receive Jesus with my whole heart.

M. P.

One day in the month of June on a Thursday my sister asked me if I could help her read this book. Right away I said yes because I loved Jesus in my sister. We began reading. She got stuck on a word so I helped her read it. Then she couldn't pronounce this word. She kept on doing this and it made me lose patience, but I right away remembered the word of life for June, "Patient endurance" so I was more patient with her. She got the word right. I was very, very happy because I remembered the word of life and because I helped my sister. She was also happy because I helped her and didn't get mad when she couldn't pronounce the words.

M. G.

Last week my brother had his graduation party. There were so many people, and so many dishes. That night it was my turn to do the dishes. My mother said I didn't have to do them, and she would do them in the morning. My mother was tired and it was late. I decided to do them now, so she wouldn't have to do them in the morning. I didn't have a chance to do all of them, but at least she wouldn't have to do half of them. Then, the next morning I got up early and my mother was still sleeping. Then I did the rest of them for Jesus in her.

M. P. C.

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

October 1979

Dear Subscriber,

We are pleased to announce that as of January 1980, LIVING CITY MAGAZINE will be published monthly. The subscription will consist of eleven issues for each calendar year.

The expiration date of your present subscription will be prorated to coincide with the new anual subscription rates (effective January 1, 1980) which will be:

United States:	*US$10*
Canada:	*US$12*
Elsewhere:	
surface mail	*US$18*
airmail	*US$25*

In other words, your one year subscription under the old rate will entitle you to receive eight issues of LIVING CITY when published monthly; or if you had a three year subscription you will be receiving tventy-three issues on a monthly basis. For your convenience, however, you will receive a notice shortly before your subscription is to expire.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for all that you have done and are doing to help LIVING CITY'

Sincerely yours,

Sharry Silvi

1980
LIVING CITY
will go monthly

Mary Anne Fitzmaurice

(continued from page 23)

During the following year, I lived in a Gen house with some African and European Gen. We didn't have telephones or hot water. At times, also, the electricity didn't work. But it was beautiful because we always tried to live mutual love.

I was an American from Chicago with my own culture, way of thinking, and ideas which I thought were the best. A new life started for me when I realized that the others thought the same. So we all had to put aside all that we were and had in order to make ourselves one with one another. And I found that in doing this, I enriched myself and really learned a lot from the others.

One day, many of us Gen went to the oil mill to sort out the palm nuts from the shells. We would be paid according to the weight and number of sacks we sorted. It was a project that the African Gen were doing to raise money for other Gen in the world. It was all new to me so I was very slow. The other Gen would stop at times to help me crack the nuts that weren't already cracked or they would help me remove nuts from the shells when I would be having a hard time. Soon the number of sacks increased. It was a beautiful experience of working together.

I usually worked in the small hospital and dispensary there. The entire staff tries to live the Gospel and the people who come for medical attention feel their love. People come even from far off villages for care because they say they feel that the people there are ready to give their lives for them.

The feast of the Assumption is a big feast for the people, one of the biggest feasts of the year. The Bangwa people have a special love for Mary as they feel that she is their mother. While I was there, the Mass and celebration were held for the first time in the new church that they had built.

People started arriving very, very early in the morning; some had walked all night to come for the celebration. Over a thousand people filled the church and many had to stand outside. During the offertory, some of the Bangwa girls brought the gifts to the altar with an offertory dance.

After the mass, there were outdoor dances in colorful native costumes and native songs were sung to the accompaniment of drums. Even the chiefs and sub-chiefs danced. Everyone participated in one way or another. Children were selling sugar cane slices, little loaves of bread, peanuts, bananas, oranges and so forth. The Gen 3 had also prepared a show on the life of Jesus, finishing with Mary's assumption into heaven. It was a beautiful festival .

I lived in Fontem for a year and a half and then I returned to the United States. I was now more convinced than ever that unity among all peoples is possible. I knew it wouldn't be enough to give only a year and half of my life to God; I wanted to give him all of my life, and I experience each day the freedom of loving and living in order to reach "that all may be one." ●

(drawing by Paolo Scirpa)

" . . . If she looked at me she would have a sour expression on her face."

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for me it was a big blow. It happened to be the family that I was most eager to be reconciled with. I sent Easter eggs to their children, together with a note that I thought was particularly beautiful, appropriate and heartfelt. I received a a call from a member of the family saying that what I said and what I proposed to do were too good to be true. "If it's so good, why don't we make it come true right away?" I interrupted. "That's easy to say" he replied, "Have you forgotten what has happened between us - all because of you?"

I answered spontaneously, "I did not ask you to dig up the past and to start measuring each other's guilt. But I thought it might be helpful to try to understand why the disagreement came about, and why there doesn't seem to be a way to resolve it. Can it be that nothing can erase this deep animosity that has been separating us for years? Don't you think that it grew out of excessive pride, out of a lack of love on both sides? And that this is the real guilt that we should accuse ourselves of? It could be remedied with a little bit of good will."

There was a moment of hesitation on the other end, then came the answer: "It's useless, we can't forget. You no longer exist for us. So don't bother making any further attempts if you don't want to find yourself in trouble."

I felt defeated and wondered about the purpose of all that I had done up to then, if everything was to finish like this. In my anguish, I even doubted that God's help had been with me. But then as Easter arrived, and I was about to receive communion, I felt that I could offer not only my successes, but above all, it was the acceptance of my defeat that could perhaps be the most beautiful gift I could give. ●